

# **EPA Brownfields Assessment Demonstration Pilot**

## ***Port Arthur, TX***

Outreach and Special Projects Staff (5105)

Quick Reference Fact Sheet

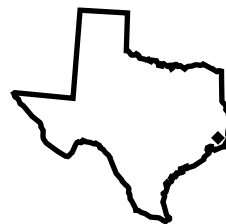
**EPA's** Brownfields Economic Redevelopment Initiative is designed to empower states, communities, and other stakeholders in economic redevelopment to work together in a timely manner to prevent, assess, safely clean up, and sustainably reuse brownfields. A brownfield is a site, or portion thereof, that has actual or perceived contamination and an active potential for redevelopment or reuse. EPA is funding: assessment demonstration pilot programs (each funded up to \$200,000 over two years), to assess brownfields sites and to test cleanup and redevelopment models; job training pilot programs (each funded up to \$200,000 over two years), to provide training for residents of communities affected by brownfields to facilitate cleanup of brownfields sites and prepare trainees for future employment in the environmental field; and, cleanup revolving loan fund programs (each funded up to \$500,000 over five years) to capitalize loan funds to make loans for the environmental cleanup of brownfields. These pilot programs are intended to provide EPA, states, tribes, municipalities, and communities with useful information and strategies as they continue to seek new methods to promote a unified approach to site assessment, environmental cleanup, and redevelopment.

### **BACKGROUND**

EPA has selected the City of Port Arthur for a Brownfields Pilot. Port Arthur is located along the Gulf Coast in southeast Texas and is rich in ethnic and racial diversity. The advent of the railroad and the port established the city as an important terminus of the Kansas City Southern Railroad and as one of the largest refinery ports in the country. The city attracted industry and became home to 11 major manufacturing companies. Unfortunately, the area entered a period of decline, and by the early 1990s, 9 of the 11 manufacturing facilities ceased operations. With the closure of these facilities came the closure of many small and medium suppliers to these facilities. As the industrial base declined, so did the adjacent neighborhoods.

The Pilot targets properties in areas that have large minority populations who have been impacted by economic distress and perceived environmental contamination. The targeted properties are primarily located on the West Side of Port Arthur and near downtown. These areas encompass large tracts of vacant and underutilized sites and represent a major

### **PILOT SNAPSHOT**



*Port Arthur, TX*

**Date of Announcement:**  
May 2000

**Amount:** \$200,000

**Profile:** The City of Port Arthur targets brownfields located on the West Side of Port Arthur and near downtown—areas known for their economic and environmental blight.

#### **Contacts:**

City of Port Arthur  
(409) 983-8101

Regional Brownfields Team  
U.S. EPA - Region 6  
(214) 665-6736

Visit the EPA Region 6 Brownfields web site at:  
<http://www.epa.gov/earth1r6/6sf/bfpages/sfbfhome.htm>

For further information, including specific Pilot contacts, additional Pilot information, brownfields news and events, and publications and links, visit the EPA Brownfields web site at:  
<http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/>

source of economic and environmental blight. For example, 40 percent of the West Side's minority residents live below the poverty level and almost 50 percent are unemployed.

## **OBJECTIVES**

The aim of the city is to remove environmental barriers to redevelopment, restore properties in distressed areas to productive reuse, and rebuild sustainable communities. The city plans to create a cleanup and redevelopment process that will serve as a catalyst for neighborhood recovery and economic growth. The city will use the Pilot to focus on brownfields as the central link between environmental protection and economic revitalization to the distressed areas.

## **ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND ACTIVITIES**

Activities planned as part of this Pilot include:

- Identifying brownfields, creating an inventory of sites, and selecting high-priority sites for further assistance;
- Conducting environmental assessments on approximately six targeted sites;
- Designing and implementing community involvement strategies to ensure public participation; and
- Developing tools and models to reduce barriers to brownfields cleanup and redevelopment.

*The cooperative agreement for this Pilot has not yet been negotiated; therefore, activities described in this fact sheet are subject to change.*